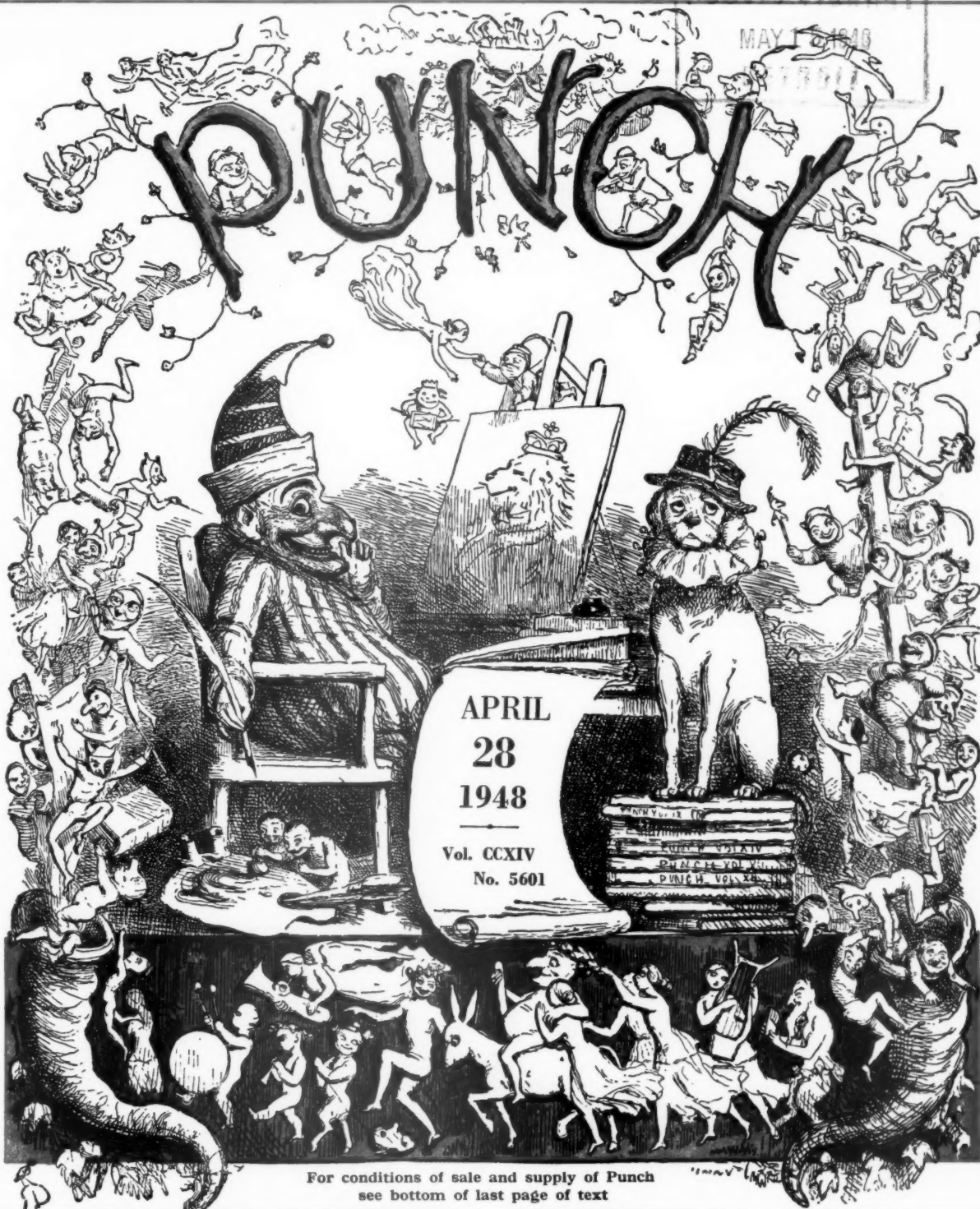




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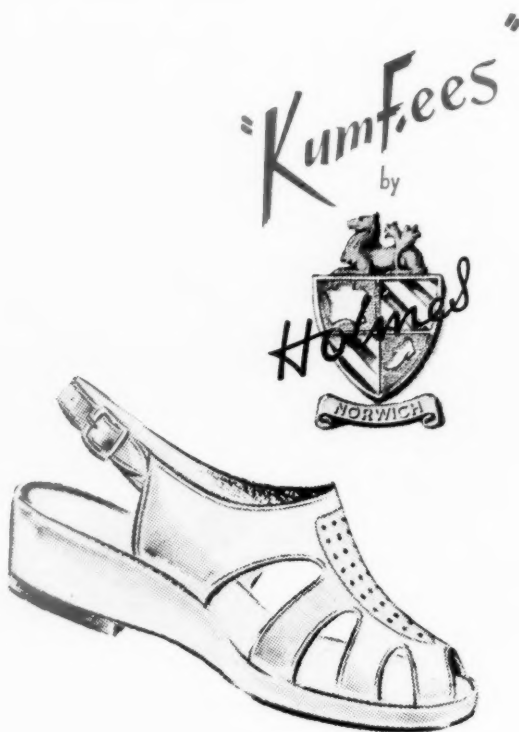
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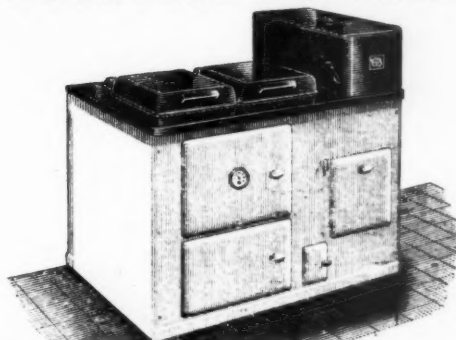
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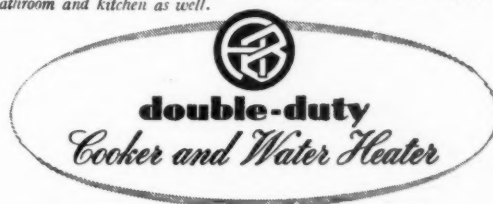
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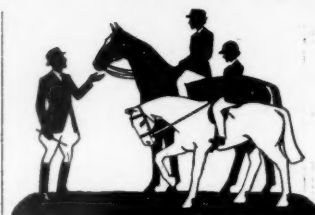
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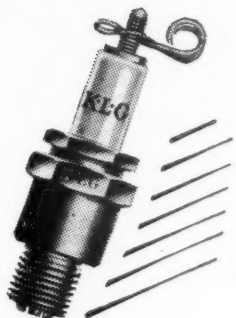
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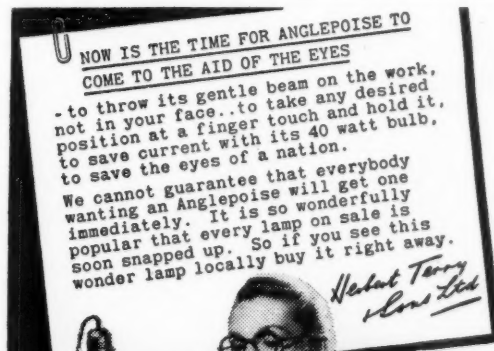
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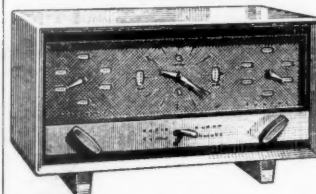
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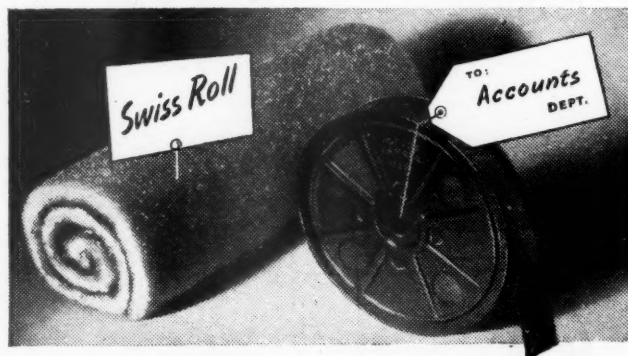
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Where there's need—there's The Salvation Army

*Thirty years ago, Bert and Mary Jones quarrelled. Bert walked out. Soon after, Mary sailed to Australia with their two small sons. When her elder son, in R.A.A.F. uniform, bade her good-bye, Mary said, "Perhaps you can find your father when you get to England". Bert's son told this story to The Salvation Army Missing Persons' Bureau. To-day the family is happily reunited. 4,000 such enquiries are received each year and two-thirds are successfully solved.

*Only the name is fictitious

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How many rolls to a reel?

The connection between Swiss Roll and ciné-film? Just that Lyons of Cadby Hall was the first firm to adopt photographic accounting on a big scale, using a special 'Kodak' automatic camera. This machine can photograph up to 3,000 documents on a 100 ft. reel of 16 mm. film, and if we are any judge of the popularity of Swiss Roll, we would say that each reel must contain orders for several miles of roll!

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PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIVARI



Vol. CCXIV No. 5601

April 28 1948

Charivaria

A WOMAN willed that her entire fortune should be put into a cats' home. There will, of course, be the usual deduction for the Government kitty.

Research chemists are said to be experimenting with a view to perfecting a strange new drug which becomes harmless when stolen from a car.

According to a newspaper report, more people than ever before are anxious to be on the telephone. Anyone using a kiosk has only to glance round to confirm this.

A prisoner about to be released was found in possession of sixteen teaspoons. He explained that he took them in mistake, thinking they were silver.



"STEEL SHEETS CHEAPER"
"The Times."
What price Iron Curtains?

Architectural improvements in their stations are promised by British Railways. A start could be made by framing the face of the booking-clerk in a Gothic arch.

Red rain recently fell in America. Motorists in this country must be careful not to leave the caps off their petrol tanks after June 1st.

"My two sons, five and seven, have never seen a jack-in-a-box. Where have they gone?"—Letter in "Sunday Express."
To look for a jack-in-a-box, perhaps.

A Canadian town has erected a statue to a local plumber's memory. Any plumber with a memory deserves a statue.

Members of a women's symphony orchestra in America wear trousers. It wouldn't do in this country; lady 'cellists always play side-saddle.



Sir Stafford is reported to be against capital punishment. Well, what about the levy?

Sheer Exuberance

"I finished my spring sowing by rolling down every field."
A. G. Street in the "Farmers' Weekly."

We are not, generally, a secretive people, but for some time now the end of bread-rationing has been kept from the Food Ministry.

"I have sold my car and bought a piano, although I haven't played for years," says a correspondent. It must seem strange at first to find that pressing down the pedal makes it go louder, not faster.



On Eloquence

HOW much of the culture we have imposed on the Far East will survive in the days to come it is of course impossible to say. But we can hope at least that the English language will continue to blossom under self-governing skies. For it blossoms very beautifully. Let me quote from the speech of Mr. K. R. P. Shroff, President of the Native Share and Stock Brokers Association, at last year's Annual General Meeting in Bombay:

"GENTLEMEN,—The passionate influences let loose by the war swept in a heavy tide over the year that has passed. . . . In this country perhaps more than in any other, turbulent political forces milled about without finding a catalyst; and economic forces followed in their wake, equally undetermined. . . . Starting with the Economic Adviser's Index Number for Variable Yield Industrial Securities (Base 1927-28=100) at 250 in March 1946, the market donned seven-league shoes in an exuberant mood and the price curve streaked up the steppes month after month with the Index making a steep gradient at 260, 267, 281, 304 and finally 315 in August when it walked off the edge of the earth—to plunge downwards in a headlong rush with the price line held taut in a perpendicular drop on to a ledge which levelled the Index back to 253 in the last calendar month. Bruised and battered the market assayed to find its feet only to discover that the political leg was the shorter and the economic leg the longer of the two. Achieving a precarious balance prices shuffled about with their tail-end in the dust, but no sooner was there an accession of strength when an extraordinary 1947-48 Budget announcement pushed them over the ledge down to the chasm below. The Index dropped like a plummet to 239.3 in February 1947, and though the loss occasioned by the new taxes may be said to have been fully valued, like the grin that remained after the Cheshire cat had faded in the air the Budget continues to haunt the market with nervousness and loss of confidence. And so prices are now hobbled to weakness and indecision as inflation threatens to make a veritable rake's progress and the hosts of deflation gather on the scene."

Mr. Shroff spoke about five or six thousand words to his Association, and he ended as finely as he had begun:

"So long have we dallied with moral phobias, juggled with economic inanities and indulged in political Machiavellianism, that out of the chill penury of the forgotten millions has grown a vast sea of discontent which has spawned suspicions, separations and strifes. . . . On the eve of momentous changes, with the country's honour and future in their hands, I beseech our leaders to stand immaculate and relentless on first principles, however fanatical the

opposition and however crushing the dead weight of frustration: to consider human values above the rude clash of arms; to be of generous regard; for not by the knife and the bludgeon but by friendliness and faith will the mountains be moved."

You shall not find orotundity so magnificent at any commercial meeting in London, no, nor in Parliament, nor in the columns of the *Economist*; and there is not a man who has ever attempted to move a mountain with a knife or with a bludgeon who will fail to echo the concluding sentiment.

As in prose, so also in poetry. The sonnet that follows reaches me from Ceylon.

"CHEERIO BRITANNIA!"

Farewell noble Britannia, Isle of Might,
That unleash'd Lanka from thy golden chain,
Not thro' a bitter shedding-blood campaign,
But by plain true-blue Statesmen steep'd in Right!
A grateful nation reborn into Light,
After a silken servitude with gain,
Charm'd by thy Grace, thou monarch of the main,
Thank thee for new-age ways, the four-chart sight.
A cultured people old as ancient Rome,
Admiring stars, sun-bathing, tho' dismay'd
By Caste and Feudal laws viciously sway'd,
Shall sing to harps in a tapestried home.
Past pangs submerged, smiling apart we go:
Hail Britannia! God bless thee! Cheerio!"

Carpers may say that the fourth line is not an adequate description of our present Government at Westminster, or that "monarch of the main" is rather too grandiloquent a way of assessing our naval strength at the moment. Nor am I quite certain what a "four-chart sight" may be. But the vision of the people of Ceylon (or Lanka) admiring stars, sun-bathing and singing to harps in a tapestried home is unforgettable. The lines are written by Mr. W. A. Sumana-Sekera, who gives me leave to print them here.

Sir Ernest Gowers has written a book instructing Civil Servants on the use of plain direct English instead of the tedious jargon of bureaucracy. But would it not be even more delightful if our government affairs at home could employ some of the wealth of imagery and metaphor that we have so carelessly and so generously taken to the East and left behind us with our bridges and our railways and our notions of medicine and law?

I for one could think of no more agreeable correspondents to write to me either about my petrol or my income tax than Mr. Shroff or Mr. Sumana-Sekera.

EVOE.

I Made a Note of It.

IN the middle of a great forest, beneath the arms of a mighty beech-tree, I threw myself down. The boughs as yet were innocent of leaves, but high up where the slanting sunlight caught them the swelling buds shone with an almost translucent quality, so that the eye, observing them through half-closed lids, was almost persuaded that the old beech was crowned with pure white blossom. The sky, seen as a patchwork of triangles and irregular polyhedrons through the interlacing branches, was of a flawless blue, not azure but that washed whitey-blue that only an April day in southern England compasses.

I made a note of this in my diary. "Patchwork," I wrote, "... washed whitey-blue ... triangles ... polyhedrons

... April compasses." These fleeting impressions are soon lost, never perhaps to be recaptured, unless the stimulus of a jotted word remains to stir them into life again.

I lay very still. Presently, if I made no sign, some vole or tiny shrew-mouse bolder than the rest would poke an inquisitive nose out of her hole, or the insistent *rat-a-tat* of a nuthatch searching in the crevices of the bark for insects would draw my eye upwards in an inch-by-inch investigation of the bole of the giant beech. Whichever it was, I should make a note of it, moving my pencil with infinite stealth, at first, over the smooth white surface of my diary until the tiny creature became accustomed, and so indifferent, to my presence. If I were lucky the nuthatch might



THE NEW DIPLOMACY

"Without wishing to go beyond the bounds of courtesy, my Government considers . . ."



"Are you sure you were wearing them when you came in?"

do something worth writing to the editor of *The Field* about. Or it might not. Half the excitement of nature study lies in this element of uncertainty about what the creatures of the wild will do.

Five, ten, fifteen minutes went by and nothing did anything. I made a note of this. To the true nature-lover there is as much interest in what has not been seen as in what has, so that time spent in waiting is seldom wasted. "The nut-hatch, with its slate-blue upper parts and rich buff throat, is not yet in evidence," I wrote, "but already . . ." It was while I was waiting with pencil poised for some material to complete the sentence that my eye caught the nest of a wood-pigeon, high up in the branches of a slender fir-tree close at hand. I cannot explain why a desire to see if there were any eggs in the nest came over me. The business of a nature-student is to keep still and observe, not to clamber. I admit that my conduct was unprofessional. But I laid down my diary and pencil and climbed the tree, for all the world as if I was twelve years old again.

The branches of slender fir-trees grow upwards at an acute angle to the trunk and are disposed at irregular intervals all round the circumference of the bole, so that the climber must pursue an erratic course, threading his head and shoulders as best he may through the maze and taking care the while not to bear down so heavily on either foot as to wedge it irretrievably between branch and trunk. One in every three or four branches snaps off when grasped and the resulting jagged spurs catch at a later stage in the turn-ups of the trousers, so that the head must frequently be withdrawn again through the tunnel it has

reluctantly forced and the whole body be arched downwards to allow the left hand to free the turn-up. This bending action brings the rear of the climber into a nexus of branches not previously explored and secondary entanglements may easily occur, particularly where the waistband of the trousers is furnished with loops. These characteristics of the young fir are accentuated as the distance from the ground increases, ultimately becoming so pronounced that the head of the climber gets wedged at or about the point of juncture of the ears and further progress is impossible.

Anxious to make a note of this I had just decided to return to the ground when a shout from below disturbed my balance.

"Come on down out o' that, you," the voice said.

An incautious movement of my left foot and the sudden snapping of the branches in which my head was imprisoned had left me without support of any kind, so that for the moment I made no reply.

"What the 'ell do you think you're up to?"

I was now considerably lower down the tree, but the friendly branch that had arrested my fall had pulled my coat up over the top of my head and my explanation was too muffled, I think, for the man to hear.

"You got no business," he said.

From where I was hanging he appeared only as a patch-work of triangles and irregular polyhedrons through the interlacing branches, but I put him down, rightly, as some sort of gamekeeper—the first seen this year.

"I am a nature-student," I repeated.

"Eggs," he said briefly. "Stealing. Come on out of it."

The lining of my coat gave way and almost at once I was beside him. "I happen to be a student," I told him, "of nature. And chancing—"

"On all fours," he said. "Like a dog. At your age."

I rose and led the way in silence to my old beech tree. "There you are," I said. "My notes—as you don't seem to believe me."

He took the diary and flattened it with his great horny hand.

"Boots," he read. "Rogers. Collect Friday."

"It's the wind," I said. "Turn over."

He turned over and a slow frown clouded his eyes.

"Patchwork," he said, "'Washed whitey-blue.' What's this, then? Your laundry book?"

I made no reply.

"April compasses!" he said with immense scorn. "Never heard of 'em."

"Oh, get on!" I said testily. "There. Down at the bottom."

"Slate-blue upper parts," he read, and his eyes rested on me for a moment with a most peculiar expression, "'and rich buff throat?' Well now. Only wants a nice photo and we'd 'ave your passport."

I have no idea what he meant, but his laugh, as I noted later in my diary, closely resembled that of the yaffle.

H. F. E.

More Achievements

IN my last article I was telling my readers something about their own achievements when I had to stop because of having got to the end, and without having said a word about knitting. While only some of my readers do any actual knitting, a great many more are conscious of clicking needles, of long muttering pauses, of woolly balls jumping round the floor on their leads and of little shiny tattered leaflets getting mixed up with the newspapers. Philosophers compare these leaflets with seed-packets for their hopeful picture on the front; the average knitter is surrounded by philosophers, cynics, people whose socks need darning and people who talk at the wrong moment, this being during counting or to a lesser extent when running a needle along the inside of one of those tattered leaflets. When knitters are not counting or brooding they are of course centres of mad activity, rather like the people who can type fast in the way they make for the end of a line and are always reaching it. Other features of knitters are their technical discussions with fellow-knitters, their tendency to lose one needle, and the care with which they roll their progress up at the end of an evening. A final word about the people who knit as they read, if only because everyone who does it is as impressively expert as everyone else.

MOVING to another field of endeavour, let us consider that mark of achievement, the biography. This is a book written entirely about one person; it may be a bygone person, but it does not by any means have to be, and there must be many famous people around to-day who have only to go into a bookshop, ask for a book called the same as they are and pay for it—or more simply to take the book down from its good but not crudely good position in their own bookshelves—to be able to learn exactly what they have been doing all their lives; and we must remember, when judging the probable effect of a biography on its subject, that it is usually a long work, sometimes costing over a pound, and that the footnotes alone may amount to as much print as would do the average citizen proud.

Another rather similar achievement, but shorter and printed smaller, is getting into *Who's Who*. Psychologists aver that if they know anything about human nature it cannot read half a dozen entries in *Who's Who*—this being human nature's way of looking up one entry—without deciding on its own best-sounding recreations. Getting back to biographies of bygone famous people I must just mention their tendencies to fanciful titles, the trouble Shakespeare has given to generations of millers after the truth, and the fact that Boswell's Johnson is read back-

wards, sideways and with fervour to an extent paralleled only by telephone directories.

By this time of year most of my readers with grass to mow will have mown it, and I should like to remind them how they set about it. First they saw for themselves, or were told, that the grass was at last long enough to be too long, then they chose the day and got the mower out—an almost festive occasion for those who hear it coming, but one fraught for the getter-out with extraordinary things like carpet-beaters and canvas bicycle tyres—and then, after much oiling and fussing, they started work. Mowing is always an achievement, because you can see the bit you have done, but at the beginning of the season, as the mower and its guide plough through the tufts, it has an epic quality; it is turning an oblong of grass into the lawn which will make the garden look as nice as people remember it used to. I need not add that the person who does this first mowing is less satisfied, apparently genuinely so, than the onlookers, and that if it rains just afterwards the mowing will be voted to have been done just in time.

Of the amazing number of domestic achievements open to any participant in home life I shall pick out the notable and chronic example of washing up overnight. Overnight washing up happens, as its name implies, late in the evening and after a party—hence the coffee-cups and glasses that help to make it what it is—and only to those who, caught up in the prevailing geniality, were silly enough to brush away those quite serious offers of help that visitors are so nice about. It is rarely accomplished without someone suggesting that it won't take a minute in the morning; a piece of downright sophistry, for my readers know that if there is anything worse than the first glimpse of a kitchen left over from yesterday it is the closer view got when digging out the breakfast china.

Talking, as I was earlier on, of people who type fast reminds me that every now and then I like to put in a bit for my typing readers, and this seems the place for a note on how to get the lid on a portable typewriter. The thing is to reduce the typewriter to the size of the lid by ramming in the outworks, and this is so much a matter of experience that not even the most detailed explanation from three feet off can do anything for the borrower-novice. I have classed it as an achievement, apart from the number of possible handles and the final struggle with the bit at the back of the lid which no experience ever made any easier, because it is so often coloured with the fine feeling of having finished typing, if only of having typed one of those little amateur lists—such as Gramophone Record in Black Case—which are noted for the opportunities they offer us to be inconsistent about capital letters.

ANDE.

At the Pictures

The Murderers Are Amongst Us—Broken Journey—The Roosevelt Story

MANY writers about "the first post-war German film," *The Murderers Are Amongst Us* (Director: WOLFGANG STAUDTE), seem to have found it disturbing less in itself than as a revelation

of the face of it, could be more hackneyed? Yet one's interest is held all the time, partly by the competence and personalities of the players, mostly by the scene and the way it is presented.

The sequences are punctuated by shots of the rotting skyline of the shattered city; at every turn one is reminded of the overmastering problem of merely existing among these piles of rubble. It may be that this implies self-pity (our own characteristically national picture of a similar situation would no doubt show a cheerful Cockney postman carefully pushing letters through a door behind which there was no house left), but I don't think the film suffers as a film. It's an interesting experience to get once more the flavour of the old German films—the enormous close-ups, the strained concentration on tiny things and tiny actions, the heavy lighting, the use of distorted shadows. The whole thing is brilliantly done, and though its impression is sombre it contrives not to be gloomy; you will be given something to think about as well as being entertained, but you won't be depressed.

Similarly it is the scene that counts in *Broken Journey* (Director: KENNETH ANNAKIN). One can't these days be very greatly

impressed by the old all-in-the-same-boat story (almost the easiest formula for producing a narrative out of anything at all), but this film does handle it remarkably well. Usually in this contrived situation one finds a chorus-girl who unexpectedly—unexpectedly to all but the habitual film-goer—turns out to be equipped with infinite human wisdom and is able to settle all the troubles of the others between one wise-crack and the next; but here, though we do get a painstakingly miscellaneous and picturesque assortment

of characters, that one is omitted. They are the passengers in a plane that crash-lands in a desolate spot in the Alps, and the idea is of course that they reveal their true natures (with from time to time the dramatically useful modicum of hysteria) under the stresses to which they are exposed. One is a man in an iron lung, another a boxer, another an operatic singer, another a film-star . . . but it is the snow and the fine Alpine scenery rather than these types (who might after all hatch out as much of a "plot" if the author stuck them for half an hour in a lift) that give the picture its interest. PHYLLIS CALVERT does nicely with the straightforward part of a stiff-upper-lip air-hostess, and the people cast as types (FRANCIS L. SULLIVAN, RAYMOND HUNTLEY) manage to be something more than types.

If you are not worried by sentimentality or rhetoric you should find little wrong with *The Roosevelt Story* (Compiler and supervising editor: WALTER KLEE). This is a collection of newsreel material about the late President from his earliest days in public life to the time of his death, and it holds the attention in a way quite unusual for such things; not, I think, by any means only because most of us had such respect and affection for the man. The sentimentality and rhetoric come in the commentary, which purports to be spoken by a cab-driver who seems to model his delivery on that of Humphrey Bogart. Other voices are used, but the words that come out of it best are Roosevelt's own, spoken by him.

R. M.



(The Murderers Are Amongst Us.)

THE CONSOLATIONS OF ASTROLOGY

Herr Mondschein ROBERT FORSCH
Herr Timm ALBERT JOHANN

of a "national mentality"; the word "self-pity" has recurred in nearly all the reviews. I wouldn't venture to draw any conclusions about Germans in general on the evidence of this one film, which is certainly impressive and memorable as a picture of life in the patched and crumbling ruins of Berlin in late 1945. No doubt it was meant to have a wider application; each of the principal characters represents something beyond himself or herself. But the framework of the "plot" is so distractingly simple and obvious that the possibility of its holding any real depth is hard to bear in mind. Here we have the old, perennially popular story of the misanthropic doctor who is brought to believe in life again by being called on to perform an emergency operation (the usual one—on a child with diphtheria) and by the love and encouragement of a girl. What, on



(Broken Journey)

ENTER OPERATIC TENOR

Mary Johnstone PHYLLIS CALVERT
Perami FRANCIS L. SULLIVAN

THE GREAT FOUR-PASSENGER GAME

Ferguson



For this game, all that is required is one taxi (with driver) and four passengers.



First, two of the passengers hop nimbly into the taxi, and settle down on the back seat.



Then the third passenger enters, while passengers 1 and 2 hold down his tip-up seat for him.

Doctors

IN the past I have been in the habit of dividing my custom fairly evenly among the four doctors in Munton-on-Sea, but I am told that under the new Act I must entrust my fragile frame to a single practitioner. It is a choice not lightly to be made. If it were merely a matter of getting flies out of eyes I should unhesitatingly plump for Carruthers-Houghton, who has twice performed this delicate operation for me with complete success, whereas the only fly I took to Stuncheon he said was not there, so that in the end I was obliged to get it out myself by standing for hours over the wash-basin rolling my eye in an eye-bath and pouring gallons of water down the front of my shirt.

Weak as he may be on eyes, however, Stuncheon has made a grand job of my annual malaria, making it last just long enough to give me an adequate holiday from arduous toil, but not long enough to allow me to get bored. Stuncheon was away when I had it in 1947 and I tried Carruthers-Houghton, but the man was quite hopeless. He said it was not malaria but influenza, and I have absolutely no time for a man who thinks I took the trouble to spend nearly four years in the Middle East just to come home and have attacks of ordinary common influenza every winter.

When my big toe went all to pieces last August I took it to Winchelby, and I was deeply impressed with his toe-side manner, but the fact that a man is thoroughly at home with big toes is no proof that he will remove a neat fly or be quite clear on the subject of what is and what is not malaria, and as he effected a thorough cure and the other big toe has always behaved admirably I am inclined to remove Winchelby from the list of candidates. It is tough on the man, but it is impossible to

institute these great national reforms without a little incidental hardship to individuals.

My inside I have always placed in the capable hands of Boldingham, with whom I play a good deal of snooker. By describing my symptoms while he was shaping up to pot the decisive black I have pulled many a tight game out of the fire, and quite apart from this I have been thoroughly satisfied with Boldingham's general attitude to my inside. About once in two months I have sharpish pains and rush round to him to tell him that I am sure I have appendicitis or duodenal ulcers or something else equally expensive, but he invariably pooh-poohs my fears in a delightfully soothing way and just gives me some stuff that tastes like old boots, and all is well for another couple of months.

I think I shall have to gamble either on Stuncheon or Boldingham, because I feel that Carruthers-Houghton's skill in taking flies out of eyes may indicate a taste for taking things out which I should not like him to gratify on my inside, and life would be pretty bleak if I could not go on enjoying either my inside or my malaria.

From Stuncheon's appreciation of my malaria I think I can fairly deduce that he would take a right attitude to my inside, and from Boldingham's delicate approach to my inside I think he could be trusted to appreciate my malaria at its full value. From a purely medical point of view there seems little to choose between them.

I had arrived thus far in my reflections when Edith came in and said that she had just met a new doctor who has recently arrived in Munton-on-Sea. She says she has promised him our business because he has a nice smile and his wife plays bridge. D. H. B.



Finally the fourth passenger, having finished instructing the driver, climbs carefully in and, helped by the other three—



prepares to lower himself into the remaining seat, while at the same time attempting to shut the door...



And it is at this precise moment, of course, that the driver slams in his clutch.



"Before we go in to dinner I wonder if you'd care to give us a hand to wash up our LUNCH things."

Sculptor and Painter

WHILE French sculpture since Rodin has been notable not least for its passion, English statuary, as manifested in our parks and squares, has been generally "of a character to cool emotion." Not "impassioned," nor even, I think, "inspiring," but "monumental, impressive, of great dignity"—these are the epithets I would choose to apply to the long line of public memorials designed by Sir William Reid Dick. It is characteristic of the sculptor that his bronze statue of President Roosevelt, unveiled recently in Grosvenor Square, should reveal that great man not as a commanding, eloquent figure, his hand impulsively stretched out in expressive gesture, but as a sombre statesman taking an airing. That it is a moving memorial to those who knew the President intimately I can well believe; but those of us who judge the statue with more critical eyes will, I imagine, be impressed rather than transported by this worthy addition to our outdoor statuary—and impressed chiefly by the wisdom of concealing the ungraceful lines of a lounge suit under the folds of a cloak.

After the ceremony I walked to Leicester Square to see the recent paintings of Lawrence Gowing, which were on view at the Leicester Galleries until the 27th of the month. This young man of thirty, who has lately been appointed Professor of Fine Art at Durham University, belongs to the Euston Road Group, whose members, though they produce no more than a handful of works a year, usually outstrip their rivals like the tortoise in the fable.

It is just ten years ago since three of Tonks' pupils, William Coldstream, Rodrigo Moynihan, and Claude Rogers, took a studio off the Euston Road and founded a School which in recent years has provided the Academy with

several of its most remarkable Associates. The characteristics of their style are a subdued palette, close observation of nature, complete absence of eccentricity, and in portraiture a sensitive modelling of head and hands usually finished with telling strokes of umber drawn with a fine brush. Moynihan's portrait of Princess Elizabeth in last year's Academy, Coldstream's "Hands and Cat," and in the present exhibition Gowing's astonishingly assured "Judith at Seventeen" are examples of this distinctive manner. It is evident that Gowing has learned much from Coldstream, but despite his unmistakable debt to the older artist in one or two portraits, he preserves his identity in his solidly painted still-lives and some delicious harmonies in green painted in the country around Sutton.

N. A. D. W.

Ideal Home

"YOU'RE one of the lucky ones, sir, finding a little home like this. Hollyhocks and roses. Apples and pears. Sort of place you've dreamed of ever since you was demobbed, that's what it's been. Funny how it takes me right back, looking at all the nettles there.

Still, I don't expect a few weeds stopped them asking you a fancy price for it. Fifty years, man and boy, I've watched it over this gate, and thought a good push would turn the whole house to biscuit crumbs.

Seems as if it was meant for you all along, really: first being condemned, then the evacuees, then the last people getting fed up and leaving. Your lady will be ever so pleased you've got somewhere, even if it is old-fashioned.

Likes things old-fashioned, does she? I dare say, after seeing life in the Forces. Free and easy, eh? She hasn't forgotten. What's that, sir? Set her heart on a Georgian manor. Then she won't mind these criss-cross windows, though they do make the place dark. Can't say I'm keen on these small panes myself: they don't seem to let the sun in like proper windows.

That won't worry you here, though. See why?

Faces north.

Besides, you won't want very big windows when all you've got to look out at is weeds and a little corrugated shed.

There you go, sir! Just like the last people, already. Forever trying to get things altered. But don't you worry. Ten pound limit or no ten pound limit, you won't get the builders round here to touch these old places.

Can't really blame them. Take the roof, now. Perhaps you'd think it was worth having a go to get that wet moss off. You'd think so all right if you'd watched it like I have, year after year, soaking all the wet up. Sick and tired, the people used to get, when the rain came in, always running round with buckets. But you so much as touch one of those leaky old tiles and down the whole lot comes.

Then there's the lane up here.

I don't say the people grumbled about the mud; they got used to that. Fetching rations so far don't matter much; you can carry those, even if it is a good long walk for them.

Taxis, now. Bumping in and out of the puddles. You won't catch drivers coming up this lane, not for the King himself you won't. I've known whole families at their wits' end how to get to the station. Down on their bended knees they'd go. 'Tweren't a bit of good. Stuck here in the snow, too.

They might have been at the North Pole, the way



"Another morning off! Don't tell me they're burning your grandmother at the stake again."

they'd keep going on. It was being so cut off, they said. No telephone. No bus. Supposing one of them got took ill? No cinema. No shops. Don't know when we're well off, that's what's wrong with some of us.

Perhaps you are right, sir. Perhaps it is nice, having the farm so near. Depends on how you look at it. You can keep some of the flies out if you keep all the windows shut all the summer, but it's not easy. Crawling over your dinner—who's to know what they've had their legs in? Doesn't do to think of it, specially not where there's a little baby. Can't help it, though, can you? That's the worst of a farmyard: keeps coming into your mind somehow. Different if they'd give you a drop of extra milk now and again, or an egg, to help you out. Think they'd oblige you? Not a hope of it.

Call themselves neighbours! . . .

Yes, here I am again, sir. Came in right behind you. Steady, now. Wait till I get a match struck.

I'm not surprised you didn't see me. Understand what I mean better, about those little windows? Barely a gleam, eh? Yes, it may be partly the cobwebs. A good idea to wipe some of them off the glass, but you'll have to keep on at them.

You won't notice the dark so much at night; you can have the lamps then, if you don't mind the work cleaning them. Be handy if there was electric light, all the same, then you could have it on in the daytime. When it's on. You're luckier than most, sir. They can't keep turning it off, can they, if you haven't got it?

Yes, I've shut the front door. Quite sure. Rattles like an express train, doesn't it? Always has done. It's not just that the wind is this way to-day. And it's not only the front door. Hear all the others? That's those doors with fancy boot-laces and latches: only needs a breath of wind to set 'em all going. Still, if your lady was

once in the Forces she got used to a lot of banging and slamming.

Another thing.

I'm sure I don't know how your missis is going to keep these bricks on the floor clean. Oh, dear me, sir. You expect she'll manage. Excuse me saying so, that shows just how long you've been married. Scrubbing bricks is hard work if it's not what you're accustomed to. Then there's getting the brush into the cracks. Makes me wish there was someone in the village could come in and give you a hand sometimes. There it is, though.

Mind you, I wouldn't say the brick floor is really damp. It's just the feel of it. The cold seems to strike right up into your bones, doesn't it?

Nice if you could get something to put down on top of the bricks. A bit of lino, say. A lot easier to clean, that would be. And not so bare-looking.

It's not only the look of it. Just you put your ear down here a minute. Get it? Wind simply whistling up between the cracks? Pretty near blows you off the floor if you give it a chance to. But you can't buy lino. And when you can, it's only that sort of cardboard.

Three or four heavy great curtains, the last lady had, trying to keep draughts out. You could do the same, maybe, if it wasn't for coupons. Not that it did them much good. Unhealthy lot. Always coughing and sneezing.

It's different when it's hot, though. There'll be days when you'll pray for a breath of wind, if it's only to move the farm smell on . . ."

What's Cooking?

"Accounts Clerk, young, required to understudy Accountant of manufacturing company, preferably with some professional and cooking experience."—*Advt. in Bucks paper.*



"They say we lose two pounds for every passenger we carry."



"I suppose it's psycho-neurosis, but I've got an awful feeling of something nasty creeping up on me."

The Forest Arms

WALK gently
Or the dog will bite you;
Speak civil
Or Kim will fight you;
Be humble,
Eat what's put before you, never grumble
And you shall learn the charms
Of the Forest Arms.

Dudley will show you where the rabbits run
In Cwm Cothi meadow when day is done
And stars are skipping.
You shall have his gun.

Bert will harness you the bright bay mare
That rides as sweetly as a rocking-chair
And needs no whipping
To fly through the air.

Dolly will make you up the softest bed
And go about the house with her dark head
Planning omelettes, pies
And baked currant-bread.

And Kim will leave you in his favourite nook
On the twisting banks of the Malus Brook
With his best trout flies
And his strongest hook.

Dress warmly
Or the winds will freeze you;
Look shabby
Or the men will tease you;
Start willing,
Never argue over an odd shilling
And you shall learn the charms
Of the Forest Arms. O. D.



"LONG TO REIGN OVER US!"

MONDAY, April 19th.—

The House of Commons was in a querulous mood to-day. There is of course nothing unusual in that—but to-day the feeling was all on one side of the House: the Government side. The Opposition looked on with the somewhat embarrassed (if highly interested) expressions of those who find themselves projected into a family tiff.

And in the process of rough-housing each other Ministers and their supporters said things that would have been resented with heat had they come from across the Floor. In fact one might call it civil war, except that there can be few words in the dictionary less descriptive of the general atmosphere than "civil."

Like all the best dramas it started off-stage. During the week-end a telegram of support had been sent to the Socialists in the Italian general election (then in full swing) who are allied with the Communists. The wire allegedly bore the signatures of some thirty-seven or thirty-eight Labour M.P.s. But as soon as the telegram was published there was a rush of denials that the owners of the names had authorized their use on it. Mr. HERBERT MORRISON, who is the head prefect of the Party (having made the customary week-end attack on the Press for publishing the names) got to work as a sort of political Dick Barton.

So by the time he arrived in the House things were pretty tense. Mr. M. sat down, his demeanour grim, and folded his arms. A moment later Mr. JOHN FAITHFUL FORTESCUE PLATTS-MILLS, whose name had been mentioned as that of the author or producer of the offending telegram, strode in and took up a strategic position three benches to the rear.

The first shot—a "sighter," presumably—was fired by Mr. HECTOR McNEIL, the Minister of State, who referred to Mr. PLATTS-MILLS as "my honourable . . . friend," with an artistic pause before, and heavy stress on, the word "friend." Mr. PLATTS-MILLS at once retorted: "While the House will not expect me to compete in vulgarity and personal abuse with my right honourable friend, perhaps he will explain what he is talking about?"

With the score very uncertain, the matter was left—for the moment.

But as soon as questions were over Mr. RAYMOND BLACKBURN rose from the Government benches to ask that a Committee of Privileges be set up to

Impressions of Parliament

Monday, April 19th.—House of Commons: Querulous Queries.

Tuesday, April 20th.—House of Commons: A Piece More Drama.

Wednesday, April 21st.—House of Lords: Economics, Etc. House of Commons: Puzzling Persiflage.

Thursday, April 22nd.—House of Commons: Refusal—but...

look into the allegation that Members had had their names improperly attached to the famous telegram. Mr. BLACKBURN does not like Communists, and his Party does not normally seem to like his Rightist views to any great extent. But this time he was given a cheer, and he registered surprise.

Mr. Speaker gently pointed out that the Committee of Privileges was a standing Select Committee, and that no special appointment was necessary. In any case, he ruled, there was no *prima facie* case of breach of privilege.

"Then," said the ready Mr. BLACKBURN, "may we have time to debate a motion for the setting up of a *special* Select Committee to look into this?"



As L

Impressions of Parliamentarians

42. Earl Winterton (Horsham)

This being a matter of business, Mr. MORRISON rose and said he would have to consider the motion before making any definite pronouncement. But, he added, action—and *effective* action at that—was going to be taken.

Mr. BLACKBURN said some of the signatures appeared to have been, in effect, forged or obtained by misrepresentation—which are hard words in Parliamentary discussion.

Mr. PLATTS-MILLS jumped up and asked leave to make a few observations, "as one who adhered to this telegram," but he was pulled up by Mr. Speaker

with the reminder that personal explanations may not contain controversial matter.

He promptly "reserved his defence," and announced that he would make a statement on some other occasion.

Mr. MORRISON nodded his head in grim agreement, but Sir WALDRON SMITHERS, from the other side of the

House, asked whether this really was a domestic Labour Party matter, and whether it should not be dealt with by the full House.

"It's going," said Mr. M., "to be dealt with—effectively!"

Mr. OLIVER STANLEY pointed out the difficulties that might arise if Members' names were used without authorization, and Mr. CECIL POOLE, sitting next to Mr. PLATTS-MILLS, announced that there were "an awful lot of people on this side of the House for whose consciences I should not like to speak." This offering was received with loud and approving cheers from the Conservative benches, but with notably less enthusiasm on the Government side.

The business of the day was a discussion on the export targets, but, although they tried hard, Members seemingly could not tear their minds away from telegrams and signatures and Select Committees, and the debate lacked interest as a result.

TUESDAY, April 20th.—There was a big audience for the second act of "The Mystery of the Telegram," a drama in any number of acts and scenes. But it was rather disappointing. For one thing, the "villains" did not appear to be present, and the "hero," Mr. BLACKBURN, was content to sit silent while Mr. MORRISON announced that he did not think a Select Committee would serve any useful purpose, since the matter was really one of domestic concern to the Labour Party.

This statement was made in reply to a question by Mr. ANTHONY EDEN, whose return, after a long illness, was cheered by all. And Mr. EDEN (having thanked the Lord President and all kind friends for their welcome) mentioned that his Party would have to reserve its views on the Select Committee issue, because it was felt to involve something more than a mere domestic to-do in the Labour Party.

So the curtain came down, leaving the audience with the feeling that several more acts and the final execution tableau might be played behind the scenes—but that the noises



"As I understand it, our fodder allocation is going to be dependent on the number of livestock we kept before the crisis."

off would probably be heard for some time.

Anyway, Mr. MORRISON went out with the determined and amiably meaningful expression of a Robespierre.

At Question-time Mr. EMANUEL SHINWELL, the War Minister, was asked about the recent raid by Jewish terrorists on a British camp in Palestine with the loss of several British lives. The Minister contended that everything possible had been done to prevent such attacks, but military experts in various parts of the House took an opposite view, and were inclined to blame Mr. SHINWELL for putting too many restrictions on the Forces in Palestine in the matter of self-defence.

WEDNESDAY, April 21st.—The whole House of Commons experienced a certain liveliness this afternoon, and the snappiness was, this time, inter-Party. Everybody seemed inclined to attack everybody else, and as Mr. SHINWELL was among those present, there was no lack of fire. But some of the barracking was good-humoured, if a trifle time-wasting, and

it seemed to amuse (if bemuse is not a better word) many people in the public galleries.

For instance, there was a question by Major HAUGHTON about the fact that the Territorial Army was not to be specially represented in the ceremonial of the Royal Silver Wedding. Mr. SHINWELL replied that the H.A.C. was to be represented, and added that the Territorial Associations had not asked to be represented. This "Nobody-asked-me-sir" defence did not go at all well with the critics, and the Minister left the matter in the air.

Then the House went back to the Representation of the People Bill and talked election technicalities for hours on end. Motor-cars for voters and Proportional Representation (wistfully advocated by the Liberals) were debated at length.

When, in the House of Lords, Lord CHERWELL mentioned his unwillingness that Britain should always "live on charity" he started something—a long debate on the economic situation which ranged over practically every possible aspect of that limitless subject.

Many noble Lords condemned the

Chancellor's Capital Levy plans, and others were outspoken about the Government's nationalization schemes. Nearly every speaker had something to criticize in official policy.

But Lord ADDISON, for the Government, claimed that the policy of his colleagues was "courageous" and generally to be commended, and the debate came to an inconclusive end.

THURSDAY, April 22nd.—Mr. MORRISON repeated his refusal to set up a Select Committee to look into the Nenni telegram affair and the activities of what Mr. CHURCHILL calls the "fellow-telegraphists." Mr. EDEN intimated that this was not necessarily the last word, and that, in fact, he and his friends might have it by forcing a debate. But the Government has a monopoly of the House's time, and there may be difficulties.

From this it was a natural transition to a debate on the Government's anti-monopoly Bill, which is to set up yet another Board, this time to see that monopolies and restrictive practices—excluding those which might be exercised by Trade Unions—are curbed and controlled.



"... and I just cannot understand people saying that they find it difficult to break a habit"

The Cosmic Mess

THIS column reads with some astonishment that certain inflated persons "will expect the House of Lords to respect the decision of the House of Commons" about hanging. This column, with great respect to everyone, cannot follow the reasoning. The "enacting words" at the head of the Criminal Justice Bill, it would remind its uncountable readers, are these:

"Be it enacted by the King's most Excellent Majesty, *by and with the advice and consent of the Lords Spiritual and Temporal*, and Commons, in this present Parliament assembled and by the authority of the same, as follows:"

There seems to be no special reason why the "advice and consent" of the Lords should be considered unimportant in this affair. On the contrary.

If the Lords were to reject the new Clause they would not be standing up for foul Property or beastly Vested Interests. They would not be flouting the desires of the King's Ministers (for

the Ministers were against the Clause), or the Party in power (for it was a "free vote" and all parties were concerned), or a popular mandate (for there was none), or the People's Will (for you cannot find anyone in street or shop or pub who approves), or even the undoubted advice and desire of the House of Commons (for the clause was carried by twenty-three votes only, and only four hundred and sixty-seven voted out of six hundred and forty). Here is a question of morality and justice. The Lords include twenty-four Bishops and the best judges in the land, innumerable administrators and Justices of the Peace: and their opinion deserves at least as much "respect" as that of two hundred and forty members of the House of Commons. There can seldom have been a case which displayed so vividly the advantages of a Second Chamber, or gave the Lords so just a cause to impose delay—if only to give the Commons a chance to think again. If the Commons, having thought again,

refused "to agree with the Lords in the said amendment", then the Lords too could "think again", shrug their great shoulders and let the thing go through. Or not.

* * * * *

This column, browsing about among its dusty law-books, sees that an attempt to murder is punishable by penal servitude for life. This penalty, presumably, will now have to be reduced. Otherwise, an unsuccessful slayer might be shut up for the same time as a man who brought it off.

And what will be the effect on the doctrine of Self-Defence? Interviewed in his simply-appointed bath, Mr. Haddock said:

"One main argument of the pro-abolition speakers was that hanging is horrible, etc., because it violates the sanctity of human life, the very thing that we are seeking (by capital punishment) to defend. In other words, the life of the murderer is just as sacred as the life of the old man, or small child,

he brutally destroys. But that is not, as I understand it, the doctrine of the ancient law of self-defence. I have always understood," said Mr. Haddock, characteristically drying his ears, "that if I, my wife, child, or servant are struck, or even threatened, I am entitled to use such force as is necessary to defend myself, wife, child, servant—or indeed property. 'Nature', said Baron Parke, as of course you remember, 'prompts a man who is struck to resist: and he is justified in using such a degree of force as will prevent a repetition.' If I come home and find a burglar about to shoot my wife I may draw my gun (I always carry two or three)", said Mr. H. with a roguish twinkle, "and shoot him dead.

"In other words, at that moment the law does not—or did not—consider the burglar's life to be as sacred as my wife's. All this, however, I suppose, will now be altered."

"What course of conduct, then," this column inquired, "do you visualize as obligatory in the circumstances which you have described?"

"Well," said Mr. Haddock, characteristically brushing his not very numerous teeth, "I suppose that I must give him a reasonable address. 'Old man,' I should say, 'I hope that you will not shoot my wife, or even me. For this might cause a breach of the peace, and, even in these days, would be regarded by many as anti-social conduct. As you see, I too have a gun. But let me make it quite clear that I do not propose to shoot you, as in the bad old days I should have been tempted, and indeed compelled, to do. Your life, old boy, is just as sacred as mine, or my wife's, so pray dismiss all apprehension from your mind. It is true that you have broken and entered my house and put my spoons, forks, and cuff-links in a bag; and many might take the old-fashioned view that you were technically guilty of an offence—I will not use the harsh word "stealing". But I, at least, am willing to follow the modern trend of opinion, and judge your behaviour with more realistic eyes. The fact is, I fear, old boy, that you are a pathological case, or an economic casualty—perhaps both. In your youth, I am sure, you were shut up in a dark cupboard by a thoughtless nanny, or dropped on your head on a fender by a playful visitor. I was myself. I have never, it is true, been driven to house-breaking or robbery under arms. But then, I am not, as I expect you are, the helpless victim of a tyrannous capitalistic system. Besides, you are probably one of the many thousand unfortunates who deserted from His Majesty's

Forces and have an invincible psychological tendency not to go back. With such an accumulation of handicaps in your history and make-up, the inclination to burgle my house and frighten my wife must have had, I quite see, tremendous force behind it.

"In short, dear old chap, I quite understand your position. The only thing is, I don't suppose for a moment that you've read the Criminal Justice Bill; and you may be unaware of the modern trend of penological thought. All the emphasis now, old boy, is on reform, not repression. There's to be no hanging, no flogging, no unpleasantness at all. They'll simply give you good quarters in a nice prison and

reform you. The Governors will go carefully into that business of the dark cupboard, and all these tiresome complexes of yours will be smoothed out. After a few years you'll come out a much better man—as good as new: and that's what you'd like, I'm sure. So what I suggest, my dear fellow, is that you sit down quietly there, while I ring up the local police.' What is the number, my dear? Give the gentleman a glass of port."

"But suppose, Mr. Haddock," this column said, "that, before you reached the end of this address, the burglar shot both of you and got away with the spoons?"

"That", said Mr. Haddock, "would be most disappointing." A. P. H.

On Railway Photographs

WHATEVER the Transport Commission may do with my trains, in the way of painting, re-upholstering, furnishing with back-scratchers and the like, I trust that nothing will be done to disturb the photographs. For not only are they by now part of the cultural background of the race, but they provide the dozing season-ticket-holder with material for reflection.

My own favourite compartment features a charming view of Precipice Walk, Dolgelly, taken, at a rough guess, in 1890. Babshaw, my travelling companion, and I never tire of speculating on the whereabouts of Dolgelly, whether there is really a precipice, the identity of sundry blurred flora in the foreground and the ultimate fate of the two girls lingering self-consciously by the rustic bridge. Babshaw contends that the girls are, by now, somebody's poor relations, while I have bestowed on them large fortunes made in the corsetry business, which they entered in partnership as a result of that chance meeting in Precipice Walk.

Before we were ousted by an early-morning solo-school, Babshaw and I travelled with a more modern view of the same beauty-spot; another part of it with a lot of hills about. Babshaw is elated about the educational value of our change of scene. Before the migration we were under the impression that Precipice Walk was (a) newly-discovered, (b) about ten yards long, (c) deserted. We now know that (a) it was discovered about sixty years ago, (b) it is long enough to walk along until you can't see hills, and (c) it was formerly frequented by girls with long hair and straw hats.

We have speculated too on the

reasons why nobody goes to the Lake Pleasure Grounds, Warminster. The photographs show inviting stretches, cunningly laid out with all the allurements known to scientific man—but nobody about. My contention is that the place is taboo under an edict by the local witch-doctor. Babshaw says no, the reasons for the shunning of this Elysium are probably psychological. He refuses, however, to develop the theme.

The most exciting question of all, though, is: Do the people in railway photographs really exist? I calculate that, during my lifetime, I have met roughly ninety thousand people to talk to. Babshaw, slightly older and more talkative, has arrived at the figure of one hundred and twenty thousand for himself. Yet neither of us has ever met anyone who would admit having figured in a railway photograph. And, surely, the law of averages rears its head in such cases?

For myself, the two people I should like to meet are the man in "The Sands, Exmouth," who protrudes from a sand-pie-fringed hole with his back to the camera and a heaven-sent highlight on the shiny part of his waistcoat; and the lady, vintage 1928 or thereabouts, whom I have admired for years for her efforts to outstare a seagull in St. Ives harbour. I should like to ask the man if he dug that hole all by himself and if that is his jacket half obscured by sand-pies in the foreground. As for the lady, I merely want to know which of them ultimately won. Knowing St. Ives seagulls, I'm backing the bird.

And I shall be obliged if nobody writes to tell me where Dolgelly is. Babshaw and I feel it is better not to know.

THE Stratford season is naturally clouded by the extremely disappointing news that it is to be Sir BARRY JACKSON's last.

In two brief and busy years he has galvanized the Memorial Theatre and given new sweep and cohesion to its programme, but longer than this was needed for his imaginative policy to be seen in full maturity. In the past Stratford has had too many competent but uninspiring productions, piecemeal in pattern. The advantages of a man of Sir BARRY's distinction being in supreme control of a team of able producers, each given a wide discretion in experiment but conforming to a general over-all plan, are too obvious to need emphasis, and it is to be hoped that if his expert guidance must really be withdrawn traffic in the Bard will not fall back into either the higgledy-piggledy or the complacently mediocre.

This season promises well, and the opening play, *King John*, though often rejected as dull, has a trick of coming to the stage better than it reads. Mr. MICHAEL BENTHALL's production brings out vividly the essential conflict in the royal and ancient game of French-and-English, which is more truly at the root of the matter than the shameless jockeying of a pair of dithering kings. Shakespeare believed powerfully in authority and patriotism, and here there is enough outspoken anti-popery to throw Orangemen into an ecstasy. It is the *Bastard*, *Faulconbridge*, who puts the English point of view with all the uncompromising sturdiness of a hunting squire (how this must have delighted Elizabethan audiences!), and though that most welcome recruit, Mr. ANTHONY QUAYLE, appears a trifle subdued beside the Avon, he fills him out in good husky manner, speaking noble lines nobly and leaning on a great harpoon-like sword that seems to call for a caddie. *John* is played by Mr. ROBERT HELPMANN, made up to look like a desiccated edition of the King of Diamonds; and this Court-card idea persists through a performance which is flat but strangely accurate and sinister, with much

At the Play

King John (MEMORIAL THEATRE, STRATFORD)
Lilium (SAVILLE)—*Lucrece* (BOLTONS)

effective use of eye and profile. He, also, speaks well. As for the French king, he is taken by Mr. PAUL SCOFIELD, usually so varied in attack, on almost a single note of querulous dyspepsia, from behind a senile mask of make-up which is altogether too grotesque. Excess of make-up is a general fault on this occasion, and

in the lower parts of battle-dress to be entirely pleasing.

The Grenier-Hussenot Company, which I reviewed last week in their frivolous vein, would have done better to start their season at the Saville with the adaptation of FERENC MOLNAR's *Lilium*, for this shows off their very acceptable paces in more consolidated form. As they give it the play might be a piece by Simonon directed by the early René Clair, which is to say that it is a squalid tale of forthright brutality with a top-dressing of tenderness and gaiety. The young bully from the circus, who kills himself when his crime goes wrong, is made by M. YVES ROBERT a character of true pathetic depth, the charming little girl whose heart he breaks is taken irresistibly by Mdlle. MARIE MERGEY, the *femme fatale* fairly surges with Mdlle. ROSY VARTE, and M. JEAN-PIERRE GRENIER's comic spider from the underworld might have come straight out of O'Casey. In spite of being highly episodic, the treatment matches the theme; and the production is distinguished by many simple, effective touches.



[*Lilium*]

THE CELESTIAL BEAK

<i>The Secretary</i>	JACQUES HILLING
<i>Celestial Policeman</i>	OLIVIER HUSSENOT
<i>Lilium</i>	YVES ROBERT
<i>Celestial Policeman</i>	MARCEL CHEVALIER

another is a tendency to shout in the opening scenes. Miss ENA BURRILL is a moving *Constance*, and as *Blanch* Miss CLAIRE BLOOM shows a sense of character which suggests she may be a valuable discovery. Mr. WILLIAM MONK as *Hubert* and young TIMOTHY HARLEY as *Arthur* bring tension to the torture-chamber—I had no idea there were special irons, like two-pronged toasting-forks, steel-shafted and with handles suited to an interlocking grip, for dealing with such little things as eyes. Of the indignant gentry I thought Mr. MICHAEL GWYNN's *Salisbury*

Much of it is mimed, the rest of the story being filled in by two all-seeing narrators; but while these make exciting such incidents as *Tarquin's* wild ride to Rome, a rather heavy running commentary on things one can perfectly well see for oneself becomes irritating. Miss WORTH's delicate playing gives poignancy to the tragedy of disillusionment, and the final scene of confession and suicide is powerfully dramatic. Mr. MICHAEL GOODLIFFE has a fine voice and presence but looks too gentle and intelligent for *Tarquin*.

ERIC.

Russian Notes from Paris

"MY grandmother," said M. Borsch, "she is gone."

We are always pleased when M. Borsch comes to Mme. Boulot's. Frankly, though we hope that nobody outside our inner circle would suspect it, there are times when we grow weary of our oft-repeated reminiscences. We have, for instance, long ago ceased to find spiritual comfort in contemplating the sad fate (or fates, because they vary at each telling) of M. Albert's uncle in Clermont-Ferrand: all we are clear about is that he was courageous to the end; "c'était un martyr," as M. Albert puts it, "du premier ordre." But even a first-class martyr has his limitations as a topic of conversation, and M. Albert's uncle reached his months ago.

Similarly, M. Jean-Jacques' adventures with the 89ème Régiment in the war of *quatorze*, though gripping, lost some of their grip on us when we discovered—through the research work of M. Jules—that the 89ème Régiment never in fact existed.

But the stories related by M. Borsch have a certain stark verisimilitude which never fails to impress even hard cases like MM. Albert and Jean-Jacques. M. Borsch is a White Russian, distinguished by the fact that he has never claimed to be related to the late Czar.

"Not only," went on M. Borsch, "is my grandmother gone, but the grandfather clock he is also gone."

This looked like being one of his better stories, and we gathered round eagerly.

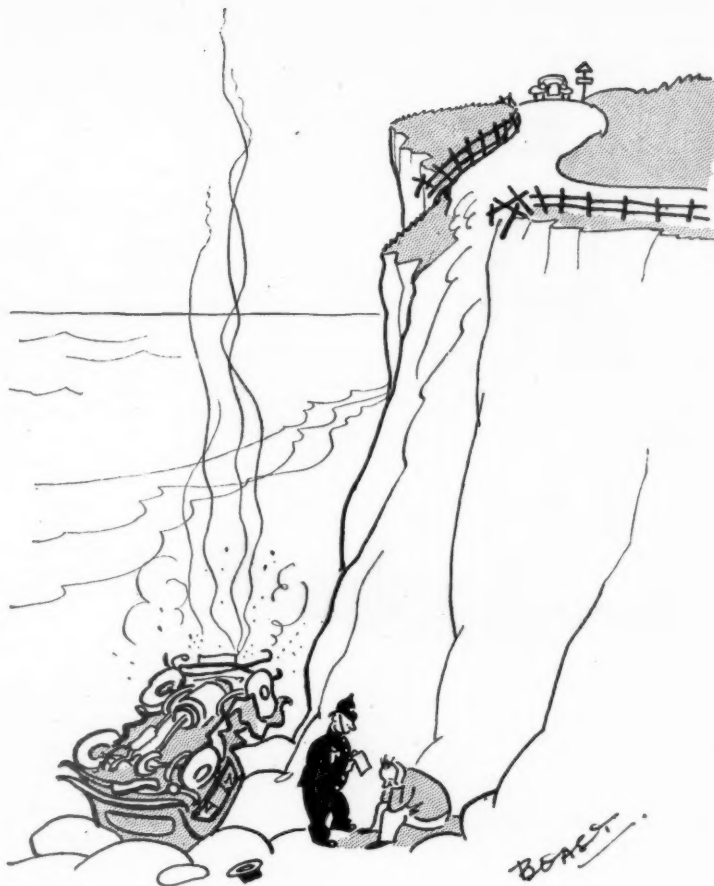
"Last night," he continued, "my grandmother is seized with a crisis of the heart, and being of a great age she expires very rapidly."

We made suitable sounds of condolence.

"A grave difficulty then presents itself. Our papers are not in order, because, as is well known, the papers of White Russians are never in order. We are unable to report the matter to the police. We must therefore conduct the remains of my grandmother to the Russian cemetery without being perceived.

"An inspiration comes to me. We will remove the contents of the grandfather clock and substitute the body of my grandmother.

"In the taxi, en route for the cemetery, I suddenly recollect my grandmother's wish to be buried in a lace cap. We stop to buy one, and the taxi-driver retires to a *bistro*.



"... And another thing—you've deviated from your route."

"Ten minutes later we return to the taxi. The grandfather clock is not there."

This was Russian tragedy at its noblest. Even practised raconteurs like M. Albert caught their breath in sheer admiration.

M. Borsch paused with professional skill to allow the drama of the situation to sink fully home.

"We are now faced with two alternatives: one, to search for the clock—with the risk that if we find it, and its contents have been discovered, we may be subjected to an embarrassing inquiry; two, to abandon my poor grandmother to an end unworthy of the dignity with which she graced this earth."

M. Borsch paused again. The solemnity of the moment was slightly marred by the ancient M. Alphonse, who had heard only part of the story,

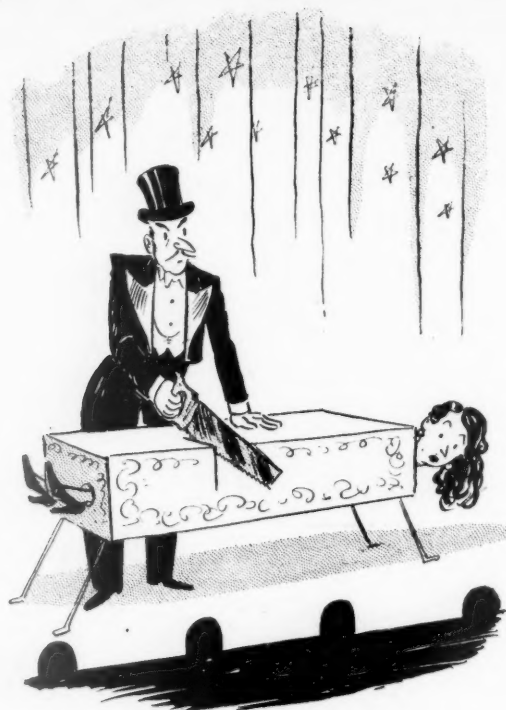
and who said that if it was a question of obtaining a grandfather clock at a reasonable price he could warmly recommend his cousin M. Dubois in the Rue Grenouille, who had been in the business for years. M. Albert led him quietly back to his corner and M. Borsch resumed.

"We are standing on the Pont Alexandre III asking ourselves what to do, when suddenly we perceive a dark object floating down the Seine.

"It is the grandfather clock, and reposing on top is a beautiful wreath of white lilies."

There was a thoughtful silence as M. Borsch walked to the door.

M. Albert was the first to recover. He said that he was reminded of a similar incident in the life of his late uncle at Clermont-Ferrand; but it was no good. M. Borsch had won the day.



Hollywood

"From down here it looks more like a third than a half."

Our Booking Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Strength Through Calamity

It may always be matter for debate whether the physical affliction that cruelly overtook President Roosevelt in middle life was an essential formative experience for the brilliant politician who became thereafter the mighty statesman. Up till then success had come his way as naturally as the family dollars and the lovely family estate, but from that time he had to pay in eternal unrelenting endurance and self-control for every inch of advance. Mr. ALDEN HATCH's biography—*Citizen of the World: Franklin D. Roosevelt* (SKEFFINGTON, 21/-)—suggests that if he was able to take the catastrophe without visibly faltering, the secret of his triumph lay in a natural joy in existence, a delight in all things human, a unity with those of his own clan. As a group portrait of the immensely virile Roosevelt tribe this study will hardly be surpassed—Eleanor, for one, from the day when the admired cousin, flamboyant Theodore, ex-President, stole all their thunder at the wedding festivities, being hardly less at the centre of the stage than her husband Franklin himself. If as history it is less satisfactory—only one-third of its pages being concerned with the vital years after September 1939, and the writer seeming to be really more interested in the rather unprepossessing details of American political manoeuvrings than in the re-making of a world fallen apart—one may still remember that without the hazard of nomination and election Roosevelt could never have been given to Europe. His most momentous, as well as his most difficult, decision was to stand for a third term as President. C. C. P.

"Delft"

Although English tin-glazed pottery is commonly known as *English Delftware* (FABER, 21/-) it has a longer and more fascinating pedigree than its alliances with Dutch potters and Chinoiserie reveal. Professor F. H. GARNER starts with the "English majolica" of Tudor days. Brown and green slip-ware was good enough for Henry VIII's lieges until that enterprising monarch imported Antwerp craftsmen; but Antwerp's methods and colours were Italian, and—though Cornish tin provided the glazes—cobalt, copper, manganese, iron and antimony furnished an oriental splendour of blue, green, purplish-black, brick-red and yellow. Over a hundred pages of admirably chosen and reproduced illustrations divide this enchanting book with its historical, technical and descriptive text; and the emphasis laid on the jugs, chargers and drug-jars of the earlier men, is a necessary corrective to those who see all the products of Lambeth and Bristol as blue plates featuring Chinamen in appropriate vegetation. Here you have Charles II in crown and ermine, posset-pots for the Cromwellian invalid, and the English birds and foliage of a still earlier Southwark mug. "Delft" was wiped out by Wedgwood before 1800. But how entertaining to revive it, with dinner-plates on which the contemporary parallel of "Church and Queen for Ever"—say "Vote Labour and Buy More Goods"—could be tactfully submerged under a helping of dehydrated egg! H. P. E.

Swift

It is difficult to think of anyone except Dr. Johnson and Leslie Stephen who has written in a calm and sensible way about Swift. Macaulay and Thackeray are only extreme examples of what happens to most people when confronted with the "Terrible Dean," as Captain BERNARD ACWORTH calls *Swift* (EYRE AND SPOTTISWOODE, 15/-) in his earnest and interesting but not particularly well-balanced biography. The standpoint from which Captain ACWORTH writes is that Swift narrowly escaped being a great Christian saint. His Christianity, the author argues, was of the head rather than the heart, he was too proud, he had too much hatred for sin, too little love for the sinner. That he was intensely ambitious in a purely worldly sense is never hinted at by Captain ACWORTH, who accounts for Johnson's "jaundiced" view of Swift by the fact that Johnson was famed for his worldly, rather than for his unworldly, wisdom, and was therefore naturally out of sympathy with Swift. Still, there is much of interest in this biography. On the historical side there is an excellent account of the South Sea Bubble, and of Swift's famous pamphlet, "The Conduct of the Allies," which ended Marlborough's career. On the interpretative side the author points out that Gulliver's first name is taken from King Lemuel, in Proverbs, whose conception of a virtuous woman (a distinctively oriental one) harmonized exactly with Swift's, as Captain ACWORTH emphasizes. Whether Stella and Vanessa were any happier for being forced to conform with King Lemuel's standards the author does not consider. H. K.

Brief Incandescence

Stephen Haggard, killed in the Middle East at the age of thirty-two, was beyond question a rare spirit, and in *The Timeless Quest* (BARKER, 15/-) Mr. CHRISTOPHER HASSALL, who knew him well, patiently traces the stages of his development. It is a critical and balanced book, less biography than portrait and a sympathetic appreciation

of a character which, elusive yet very firm, baffled and fascinated at the same time. Drawn to the stage by unexpected honours in theatricals when a student at Munich, he had never intended to be an actor, and most of the experts on whom Mr. HASSALL has called for personal accounts are agreed that though he could be brilliant in neurotic parts his acting had an amateur quality which, outside these, limited his range. He himself realized this, and had more or less decided to confine his stage work to teaching, which he loved, while making writing his career. The sensitivity and delicacy of his published prose, mainly directed to the problems of adolescence, and of a small group of poems show that here his talent might have flowered more fully. When the war came he threw himself into it, hating the whole business, with the same passionate earnestness he had brought to the theatre. His gifts were too great to be easily spared, and prominent among them was friendship. Of the many tributes in this book perhaps the most telling comes from Miss ATHENE SEYLER: "He was to me a student doing a quick and most intensive course in life, impatient to be off; curiously immature by worldly standards of wisdom—sharp-sweet in texture, like a Cox's orange pippin—yet imponderable because his weight was of the feather that is sailing out of sight."

E. O. D. K.

Miss Finch Remembers.

The Banbury side of North Oxfordshire is less known than its Cotswold flank; but the villagers of the county's most picturesque village do their marketing in Banbury and so do all the local characters of Miss FLORA THOMPSON'S posthumous countryside chronicle. *Still Glides the Stream* (OXFORD UNIVERSITY PRESS, 10/6) adds an attractive new wing to her "Lark Rise to Candleford" edifice. A school-mistress who has seen the greater world comes back to a miniature one: a community of agriculturists, village tradesmen and gentlefolks who have been signally spared aerodromes, factories and both enemy and evacuee action. The picture is still complete enough to be restored to a still greater completeness in retrospect; and very charmingly and happily the outlines and colours of Restharrow emerge. The book is an 1887 conversation-piece, in handling midway between Hogarth and Watteau, not an idyll. Kindly realism and shrewd romance touch on those admirable village hierarchies: a necessitous parson and Lady of the Manor, the more comfortably-situated "bettermost people," and the titular "poor" who are none of them too poor to relish freedom, honest work and good food. Which of us would not return to Restharrow if we could? Seat yourself on Miss Charity Finch's magic carpet, and the thing can be done.

H. P. E.

Mount Everest

Mount Everest, 1938 (CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS, 15/-), is an account by its leader, Mr. H. W. TILMAN, of the fifth abortive attempt on the mountain. Mr. TILMAN writes well, and makes the most of his material, but it cannot be said that his narrative is likely to prove of much interest to the general reader as opposed to the specialist. Descriptions of mountain expeditions soon pall except when, as in the classic example of the first ascent of the Matterhorn, they lead towards a catastrophe following on a triumph. There is nothing at all dramatic in Mr. TILMAN'S narrative; his book is really addressed to fellow-experts, and is in effect a plea for more lightly organized expeditions than had become the rule by the middle 'thirties, when an English expedition included a hundred porters and three

hundred transport animals, and foreign expeditions ran to five or six hundred porters for only a dozen Europeans. Mr. TILMAN took six Englishmen with him and twelve porters, and claims that the extra work imposed on his party kept them fit, preserving them from bed-sores, to which, it seems, Everest climbers are liable.

H. K.

Youth's Agitations

To suggest that Mr. TIMOTHY PEMBER called his new novel *The Needle's Eye* (CAPE, 9/6) because its hero so often has the hump would be an unwarranted frivolity, but certainly the gloom of youth hangs heavy over the zig-zag path of Harold Wick's progress in love and sociology. At the end as at the beginning of a longish narrative Harold is still in that "space of life" between boyhood and maturity when, as Keats knew, "the soul is in a ferment, the character undecided, the way of life uncertain, the ambition thick-sighted." Under one aspect this is but another version of the oft-told story of what happens, or is liable to happen, when the son or grandson of the manor meets the daughter of the agitator without the gate; but if the theme is old the variations which Mr. PEMBER plays on it are quite modern in their complexity. While he seems to over-simplify the social conflict, he is fashionably reluctant to resolve the inner discords of his individual characters. These are presented, so to speak, in the raw; refined but hardly clarified; and translated from mood to mood (as from scene to scene) with bewildering abruptness. They lack, not reality, for they are real enough to compel one's interest in their fortunes, but immediate distinctness.

F. B.



"Oh, and polish that crystal until you can see your future in it."

L'Esprit Sportif

IT was a glorious morning—poplars rustling against an azure sky, red-and-white cows cropping contentedly on tethering chains, black-and-white hens foraging under gnarled apple trees. Sargent and Cooke stepped out manfully on their fifteen-mile march across the Normandy plain. They had seen a poster outside the Quiberot "bistro" announcing that Arroville-des-Près and St. Silvestre-sur-Mer would dispute a "*Match de Rugby dimanche, à quinze heures.*" Their eyes glinted as they read the name of their home-town. Nothing could hold them back.

In Colombec, a *gendarme* mistook them for German farm-workers and demanded their papers. With visions of being imprisoned without trial and assumed guilty until they could prove innocence, they whipped out passports. The *gendarme* regarded the gilt lettering with deference. He failed to understand the request for the bearer to pass freely without let or hindrance, but noted the signature, "Ernest Bevin," not a name to be trifled with. He gave felicitations and salutations, and for the next three miles National Pride bore up their spirits. The lion still roared.

At Greuzeville depression set in, caused by heavy-lying Camembert and maize bread, but they plodded on, covered with a film of white chalk. The last five miles were the worst. "*Bonjour!*" hailed a cyclist just beyond Troumanches, interested in their non-Gallic clothes and hair-cuts.

Finding that he could speak English, they related the story of their march. He too was going to the match—by bicycle, a mere four miles. He had nothing but admiration for two men so full of "*l'esprit sportif*" that they cheerfully trudged fifteen miles to see a British game played on foreign soil. Modestly they accepted the compliment and explained why it was only to be expected. "*Comment?* There is a town which calls itself Rugby? And you yourselves live there?" He was enchanted. He propped up his machine, introduced himself, a Monsieur Dache, shook hands, and went on his way, pedalling furiously.

When they reached the next village the inhabitants were waiting on doorsteps, all smiles, indicating the route with encouraging motions of the thumb. Puzzled but gratified, they pressed on. "Hark," said Cooke, on the outskirts of Arroville. "Sounds like a band playing." Through the beech avenue, a ten-piece brass band advanced

towards them, pumping out a tune which bore some resemblance to "Pack Up Your Troubles." With a rapid marking of time, the musicians about-turned, encircled the two Englishmen and swept them triumphantly into the village. The main street was deserted. Straw was blowing outside the market hall. There, on the steps of the Café de la Libération stood Monsieur Dache, arms outstretched. "Welcome to Arroville," he said. "You will accept our invitation to the *Apéritif d'Honneur?*"

The two football-teams, in best suits and button-holes, were sitting, hands on knees, on the café's slippery black *banquettes*. Monsieur Dache made a speech presenting the Messieurs from Rugby, the two sportive Messieurs. Their hands were wrung, they were embraced on both cheeks by the *maire*, the deputy and the members of the Société Amicale des Sports. Their glasses were filled and refilled with vermouth and they understood not a word.

The time for the match drew near. The players left to change. The official party, headed by the band, marched to the field adjoining the manor. Sargent and Cooke, all tiredness vanished, were bowed into seats on the committee's bench, and took part in the hand-shaking as the teams filed past.

"*Alors,*" said the *Président actif*. "Le kick-off." He placed the ball in Cooke's hands. Colouring hotly, Cooke trotted out and gave a terrific *coup de pied* which sent it five metres across the pitch, amid ironic laughter from the spectators. The ball was recaptured, centred and the game began.

And what a game! In the first five minutes an *essai* was converted by the Arroville full back. Tears ran down the deputy's cheeks. "*Les bugles,*" called the *Président administratif*. "Fanfare!" cried the *Président d'Honneur*. St. Silvestre supporters who had arrived with the team, by coal lorry, bit their nails in desperation.

Cooke gave up trying to follow the course of the ball. He sat staring fixedly, in a vermilion-hued mist. Sargent, who had a smattering of French, joined in the shouts of "*Passiez, passez!*" frequently lapsing into English and roaring "Get him low. Heel! Heel!" Barking dogs leaped into the confusion. A visiting *avant* was carried off for dead. The *arbitre* raced to and fro, blowing his whistle like a man demented.

After the match a small female child appeared with a garland for the

victorious Arroville captain, and the players and officials were escorted to the Libération by the band. The banquet tables were draped with Union Jacks. Sargent and Cooke ate steadily through their first solid meal of the day, accepting, in a daze of delight, sample glasses of all the exotic liquors that the proprietor had in stock. There were of course speeches. "*Vive le Roi d'Angleterre,*" toasted the active president. "*Vive le Président de France,*" countered Sargent, his arm round the neck of a St. Silvestre *trois quart*.

Darkness had fallen when the visiting team climbed into the lorry. The band was playing, slowly and majestically, a British war-song "*Tu es mon rayon de soleil.*" Sargent and Cooke, resigned to the long trek home, found themselves lifted up alongside the gallant losers. Half an hour later, stiff and shaken, they were back in Quiberot.

Tired and "zig-zag" as they were, they felt, dimly, that some recompense must be made for French courtesy. Staggering to the far end of the village, they solemnly chalked up the score, on the poster advertising the match: "Arroville 11, St. Silvestre 6."

For the rest of their holiday, every house in the district was open to them.

A Day in the Life of Bass Kinsey

(After reading three Erskine Caldwell novels in a row.)

BASS Kinsey had lived in the Slats all his life. The Slats was a collection of tumble-down shacks straddling the fall-line road in the dust of Nexville County, Georgia. Whenever there was a boom and sedge sold well in Nexville market Bass bought props to support his worm-eaten, pine-board shack: when depression settled on the sedge market he took the props down and left them in the yard to rot.

Bass was sixty-seven. He had been married on and off to Maisie Belle for fifty-two years and she had given him twenty-seven children—Pretty Lou, Belle, Bella, Mary Pretty, Fancy Bess, Darling, Kitty Lee, Ginia Lee, Pellagra, Beri-beri, Pellagra Ann, Mostly Lou, Mode, Cude, Bude, Dide, Hude, Rooter, Pinto, Quarto, Halt, Gum-gum, Jonto, Pretty Lou II, Dearie Lou, Mary Pretty II and Ella May. Eighteen of them were dead, five were working in

the sedge-sheds of Quinton in the next county and four still lived under his leaking roof.

As usual a slump was in progress. "Reckon I'm gettin' tired eatin' skimp," Bass said. "I ain't ate nothin' but skimp an' a bite of wild parsley for two mortal years."

Pretty Lou II was washing her hair in the pig-trough. She looked up and spat at her father.

"Now, Pretty Lou II, that ain't no way to spit at your papa. Ain't I always given you the best pickin' from the skimp-bones? Ain't I always tryin' to get the tractor goin' again like it was ten years ago? Shame on you, Pretty Lou II."

Pretty Lou II reached up, tore a weatherboard from the shed and hurled it at the old man. Bass winced with pain as the blow removed his left leg.

"Now look what you done!" he said, watching the limb disintegrate as it rolled and bumped down the porch-steps into the thick dust.

Further conversation was cut short by the arrival of a decrepit Model "T" driven, apparently, by Singing Buller, the sedge-pickler. The car struggled through the grey dust, flattened the gable-end of the shack and came to

rest at the lip of the disused well. It began to subside into the sub-dust. A pitiless sun illuminated the proceedings.

Bass put down the rusty baling wire which he had been using as a toothpick.

"Howdy, Bass Kinsey, you old sonofa," Singing said. "Where's Ginia Lee?"

"Down on the swamp, likely, cuttin' moss. But what you got there in the auto, Singin'? Something smells mortal good."

"I reckon I want to marry Ginia Lee, Bass."

"She's cuttin' moss."

"Darn it, they're always for sure cuttin' moss if I want to marry 'em."

"She'll be back next to no time. But what you got in that car, Singin'? Smells powerful good and I ain't ate more'n a bite of skimp and wild parsley in two years."

But Singing was looking hard at Pretty Lou II. He just stood looking hard, switching the flies from his face with quick jerks of his ears. After a time Pretty looked at him. They kept on looking at each other in the smouldering heat.

"What you got in the auto, Singin'?" Bass said.

Receiving no answer he hopped

through the dust to the car. On the back seat he found a sack of cattle-cake. He began to drag it towards the porch.

"I'm a powerful sinful man, Singin'," Bass said, "but I ain't ate more'n a bite of sedge..."

"Bass, you old sonofa, I'm goin' to marry Pretty Lou II."

"She's cuttin' moss."

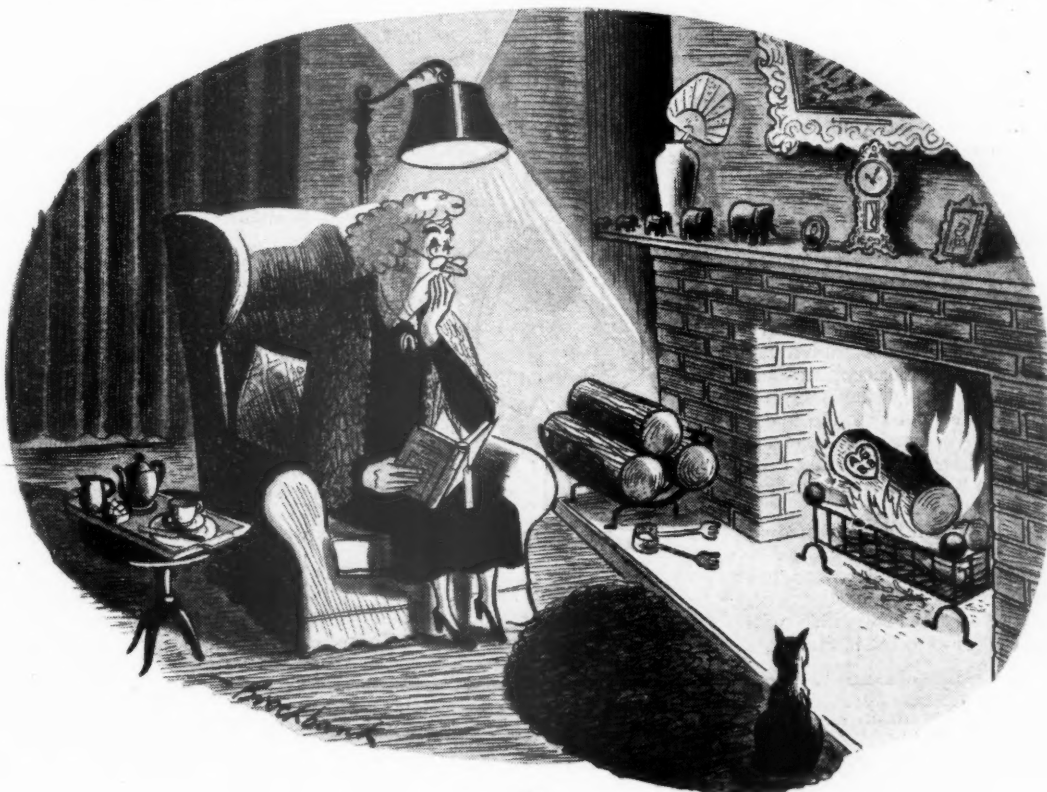
Singing took Pretty Lou II by the hand and led her towards the car. Pretty picked up a rock and hurled it at the porch. She climbed in and Singing started the engine.

"Do somethin' for me, Singin', will you?" Bass said, grinning. "I ain't strong enough to put up the props. Maybe you'll do it for me. You're a strong man, Singin', with a good steady job."

Singing Buller cursed and threw the starting-handle at the porch. Then he jumped into the car and drove off in a storm of dust.

Bass ate steadily for three hours. Then he hopped down into the yard, collected the props and set them uselessly against the sides of the shack. He stood admiring his handiwork for some minutes. Then he sat down and picked up the rusty baling-wire.

Another boom had started. Hod.



The Hungry Women

ONE of my few and secret hobbies will, I believe, interest at least half of my readers. I refer to the fascinating study of the female appetite. There is something quite extraordinary about the speed and capacity of the human female when confronted with solid food. During the war there was a rather vicious type of R.A.F. attack called "cascade bombing," when about six thousand men used to drop 1,500 tons of inedible material in about twenty minutes. It is my considered opinion that any given six thousand British women could, in twenty minutes, make these cascades seem child's-play.

How the speed of the female came into being is not absolutely clear. My own belief is that, over a period of centuries, coping with snatched meals while feeding The Brute, criticizing the children, searching for teeth and so on has produced the present state. Here I would like to associate the feminine digestion, which is also astonishing, perhaps via the same processes. I shall not dwell upon this aspect, but merely ask if anyone has ever seen, known or even heard of a female with duodenal ulcers.

The types of female and their particular capacities for food are difficult to assess, and the expert is the only one who can really state whether a woman who eats a small meal is very ill, in love, or slimming.

Let us start with the younger age-groups. Babies of either sex are quite gross about everything, but I still maintain that my sister, by virtue of screams of a higher frequency, was given more food than I. In the child stage this sister ate twenty cream horns to my eleven and was untroubled by illness. Moving rapidly to school age we find the girls sneaking a crafty bar of chocolate during geography, but still able to accept liquorice from their early admirers during the morning break. It is at school that the male, I consider, first displays his inferiority. When about fourteen he takes to smoking, while his female counterpart continues on confectionery.

At about seventeen the fair maiden, all pigtailed and gangling legs, takes a step which occasionally rests her digestion for the future battles with obesity. She falls in love with a film star. The boy is interested in film stars

too, but his appetite is unaffected. He is at the only stage in his life when his appetite is greater than his sister's.

In her twenties the girl may look demure and small or tall and incredible. It is all the same, for the looks belie the appetite, which now reaches insatiability. Take any young thing out to tea, dinner or mere fish and chips, and while you, the poor male, are perturbed by pale-blue eyes, she will quietly do a thunderbolt with any given meal.

For example, take my popsie and her seven sisters. At tea her four brothers cannot face the competition, despite their bravery against enormous odds in Italy and elsewhere. We are left, then, with the eight sisters, a few impending brothers-in-law, my popsie's mother and Pop. Pop cannot face the odds either; he goes elsewhere or sits by the fire. On the signal "Go!" there is an instantaneous criss-cross of arms, the flashing of diamond rings, and the bread has gone.

Penelope also was typical. I considered it vital to provision her during drama with chocolate or fruit. Our friendship dwindled at a concert when she opened her eyes after a movement and whispered a demand for chocolate. I went very red and pretended not to hear. (I mean, you know how Sir Adrian is about these things.) She asked again and I denied knowledge or possession of any form of food. Brooding on this for a moment she said:



"I'll wear a pink carnation in my buttonhole."

"Oh, never mind. I've got some of my own." And out it came, to the consternation of myself and the detriment of Beethoven.

At other times we sat by the fire and talked together. The same hunger applied. When I was ploughing cynically into the business of Existentialism, Penelope murmured about oranges. Alas! the whole delicate tissue of conversation was disintegrated. We ate oranges. I ate one. Penelope ate two.

We now arrive at the middle-aged woman, the ultimate in female eaters. The appetite in this group is one of moods: food will be ignored for hours and then suddenly remembered like a long-lost friend. My mother is a very fine example. There is nothing on this earth that my mother cannot eat. After a Sunday dinner I am Fragile, Do Not Bend. My mother, however, has just begun, and eats a third to a half of a suet pudding. Her sidelines in food are astonishing too. On a quiet afternoon she often weakens towards a tin of condensed milk. This contains enough food to sustain forty-two babies, one and a half elephants or a small submarine for two days. Mother takes twenty minutes to clear the lot. Then, when I decided that malt and cod-liver oil would restore my failing energies, my mother, having sampled a teaspoonful, could not resist eating half the bottle at one sitting.

Finally we come to older people. The females are now winning effortlessly, for the gentlemen rarely chew anything other than tobacco. Do not be deceived by old women who look as if they cannot endure anything heavier than biscuits. They are often secret eaters who live solely for steaks. I knew a dear old lady who lived alone with a red nose and eighteen servants. She suffered terribly during the war when only ten of those strong, tall men were allowed to search avidly for *pâté de foie gras*, oranges, spiced ham and other of the more brutal British inclinations.

To those readers who are now searching for hammers and my address I would say that I am merely inspired by jealousy. And to the question "Why do women eat so much?" you always have the counter-thrust "Why do men drink such a lot?" . . . It is because they are both enjoyable hobbies.

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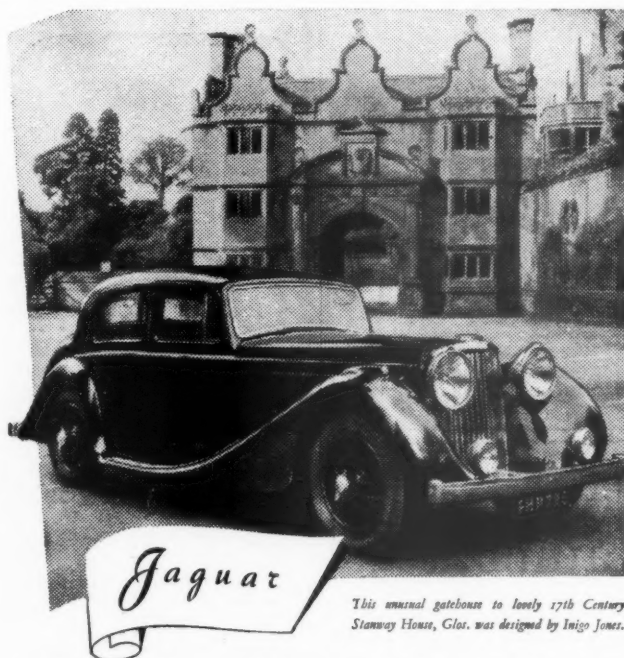
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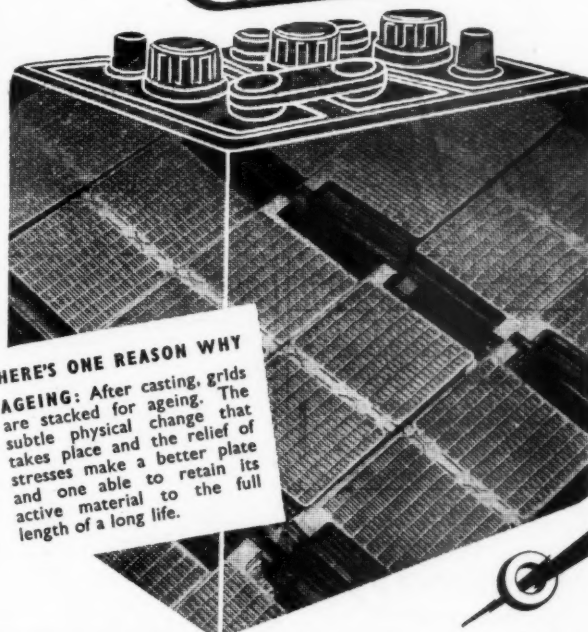
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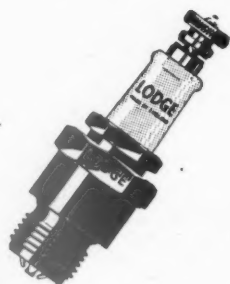
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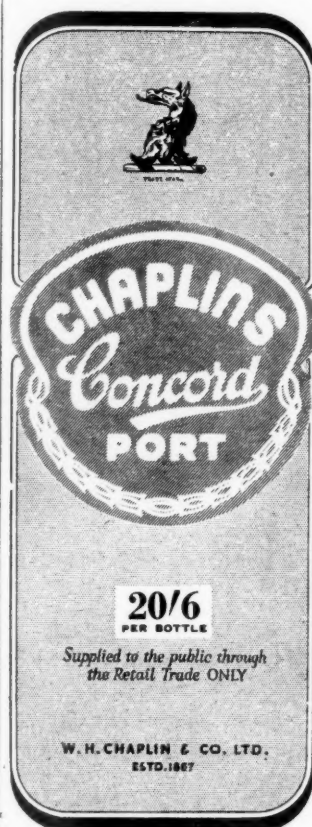
Contemplation

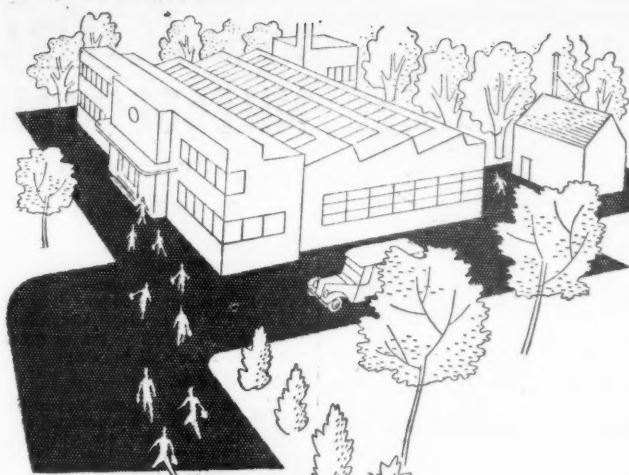
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SAVOURY PILAFFE—Basic Recipe

This recipe is a good way to make left-overs into an appetising dish—and it also saves on potatoes.

3 oz. dried peas, 6 oz. macaroni, 2 level teaspoons salt, ½ level teaspoon pepper, 4 oz. cooked carrot, 8 oz. sausages, ½ oz. cooking fat or dripping, ½ pint gravy or stock thickened with flour.

Wash the peas, soak overnight and cook next morning in the water

with 1 teaspoon salt. Break the macaroni in small pieces if necessary, wash and cook in boiling salted water. Drain and keep hot. Fry the sausages, cut into slices and keep hot. Drain the vegetables. Mix sausage slices and vegetables with the macaroni in a pan, add the gravy or stock and pepper and heat thoroughly. Serve in a hot dish and garnish with triangles of toast or fried bread, and parsley.

The VARIATIONS

INSTEAD OF MACARONI. Pearl barley (if soaked overnight it will cook in about 30 minutes), "mock rice"—there is a little about. A large tin of spaghetti in meat sauce (omit the stock or gravy).

INSTEAD OF SAUSAGES. Sausage meat rolled into walnut sized balls and fried. Any left-over cold meat, cut in small pieces. A combination of meat and sausage or sausage meat. Chopped luncheon sausage, meat loaf or galantine. Cooked flaked fish—in which case, instead of the gravy, use ½ pint white sauce, plain or flavoured with 1 level dessertspoon curry powder.

OTHER VEGETABLES. The peas and carrot in the basic recipe give appetising combination of colour. Try others: cubed swede and tomato slices, for instance, shredded cabbage and parsnip strips. Onion is also very appetising.

This dish is also good, without meat or fish filling, if you use a combination of several vegetables, and add 2-3 oz. grated cheese to white sauce in which to heat the mixture.

Browned crumbs and a little cheese can be sprinkled on the top of the heated mixture and the surface crisped under the grill.



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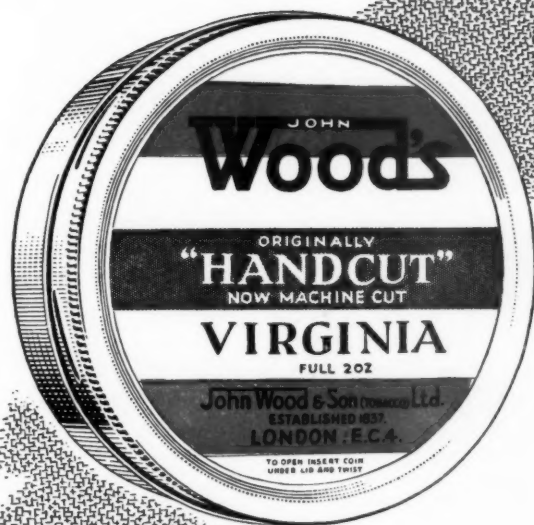
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